



Russell Hall, director of IMCOM-Europe, poses with the command's NCO and Soldier of the Year winners, Staff Sgt. Todd Allison, left, and Pfc. Jarrod Bailey. Photo by Danny Trujillo

IMCOM-Europe names NCO, Soldier of the Year

HEIDELBERG, Germany – As the 11 Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year competitors from Installation Management Command-Europe lined up to be recognized, it was fitting that they did so alphabetically.

For when the two winners stepped forward during the June 12 ceremony here, they were already naturally standing in front of their respective groups.

And by earning the top honors, Staff Sgt. Todd Allison, U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch, and Pfc. Jarrod Bailey, USAG Hohenfels, now will represent IMCOM-Europe at the IMCOM worldwide competition scheduled for next month at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Allison, NCO in charge of Garmisch's directorate of emergency services, said being named NCO of the Year certainly topped off his experience, but being able to compete was all that he could ask for.

"Honestly, just being tested alongside the other Soldiers was rewarding for me," said Allison, 28, of Springfield, Ohio. "I love my job, but when you find yourself behind a desk regularly, you start to miss the field – the type of activities you joined the Army for."

Bailey, 20, a chaplain's assistant from Canton, Mich., agreed. "Being able to get out and perform the Warrior Tasks and Drills made the event worthwhile," he said, referring to the three days of actual competition at Stuttgart, Germany, in late May.

It was there that the Soldiers underwent a comprehensive evaluation of skills ranging from physical fitness to military knowledge, including land navigation exercises, weapons qualification and written exams, along with a surprise road march thrown in as a twist.

"It's kind of like the movie 'Any Given Sunday.' Whoever wants it the most," said Command Sgt. Major John Gaines, IMCOM-Europe command sergeant major. "We test what they know and what they think they know."

Addressing all 11 Soldier-competitors and roughly 100 attendees assigned to 10 garrisons stretching from Belgium to Italy, Russell Hall, director of IMCOM-Europe, congratulated every participant.

"I applaud you for what you stand for," Hall said. "I applaud you for the risks and hazards you shoulder in protecting our way of life."

While only two of you will be going to the IMCOM competition, each of you represents IMCOM-Europe daily. I thank you."